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ALLITERATION AND VARIATION IN OLD GERMANIC NAME-GIVING.

Old Germanic names are prevailingly composed of two themes and the dominant principle in name-giving is that of variation of the two themes. According to this system one theme of the basic name of father or other relative is retained and combined with some other theme in forming the new name, as Eurich-Alarich. By the side of this principle we also often find that of alliteration and now and then repetition. In the latter principle the full name of the relative is retained; this method belongs, however, to a later period, and, as G. Storm has shown,[1] is then usually seen to be connected with the belief in the transmigration of the soul. In Germanic practice, therefore, repetition of the full name would seem to be later evolved (or borrowed); the original principle was either that of variation or that of alliteration. It is the purpose of this paper to indicate briefly the scope of these two principles in early Germanic practice with a view to ascertaining: 1) what forms the principle of variation assumes, and 2) the relative order of the two on the basis of the evidence of the names in the Old Germanic royal lines, and 3) to determine, if possible, the question of the origin of the system of repetition in Germanic and West Scandinavian. What I shall offer is intended to be merely suggestive not exhaustive.

At the outset I may say there is clearly no sharp dividing line between any two of these principles. The reason for separating repetition from variation as a system of name-giving was, of course, the fact that the former has been found to be extensively associated with the belief in the transmigration of the soul, whereas no such belief is evidenced it would seem in connection with either variation, or with alliteration. Storm found the earliest trace of repetition when Eurich, among the Visigoths of Toulouse, about 470 named his son Alarich after his great grandfather, Alarich I, the conqueror of Rome, who died in 410. Only slightly later the new practice is in evidence among the Burgundians in Eastern Gaul.[2]

[1] *Arkiv för nordisk Filologi*, 1893, pp. 199-222: "Vore Forædres Tro paa Sjælevandring og deres Opkaldelsessystem."

[2] Storm, p. 206.

He holds, therefore, that the new belief and the new custom in name-giving were borrowed from the Gauls.

Formally there may seem to be some support for the view that the custom was borrowed in that whereas the older system was a principle of similarity, the new one is a system of identity requiring the use of the identical name of the ancestor that is to be renamed. But the change from variation to repetition is also one from a lesser to a greater identity; from the identity of one theme to a principle which required the identity of both themes. Between the two there are intermediate forms in actual Germanic and W. Scandinavian practice, as there also are between alliteration and variation.[3] Also the view that variation was the primitive Germanic system necessarily must assume that variation was later displaced by the (borrowed?) system of alliteration; and further that the latter was later again replaced by variation, for this seems to be the dominant principle when repetition sets in in the West Germanic countries and in the West Scandinavian North. If alliteration be the original principle the evolution of the later principles would represent a progressive tendency to greater and greater identity in the name as the mark of kinship.

Of course alliteration and variation may originally both have existed side by side as they actually do in the earliest groups of related family names (*i. e.*, personal name-theme as the mark of family relationships). We can then readily see how one might gain dominance in one region, the other in another, both, however, being everywhere practised. Thus the alliterative principle of the E. Scandinavian royal lines around the year 500[4] would represent the complete ascendency of this principle in this region at this time.[5] However, the more complicated system it would seem was evolved out of the simpler rather than vice-versa.

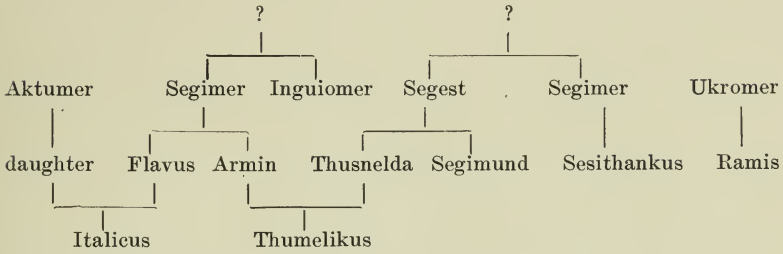
I shall now turn to the Germanic genealogies. In the earliest names of the royal lines alliteration is frequent and alliterative variation decidedly preponderates over non-alliterative. The family tree of Arminius is significant and typical. The date is the

[3] See below.

[4] This has been shown by A. Olrik, *Danmarks Heltedigtning*, I, 22-25, who holds that variation preceded alliteration.

[5] The evidence, as far as I can see, is almost exclusively East Scandinavian.

first century A. D. I reproduce the table here from F. Dahn's *Deutsche Geschichte* I, Part 1, p. 366:



Here we have then alliteration in *S* once,[6] in *Th* once and in vowel once, and alliterative variations once (*Segest—Segimund*). The name Ramis must be left out of account as uncertain. Alliteration and the primary theme *Seg-* completely dominates here. It is practically a certainty that the father of the second Segimer and his brother Segest had a name that began with *S*. The father of the first *Segimer* had a name that began with *S* or a vowel. The second theme is usually *-mer;* the first is either *Seg-* or a vocalic theme. The name *Arminius* alliterates with the uncle's name (and the grandfather's?) If it had a second theme, and the Germanic names of this family all have two themes, that then was probably *-mer* = *Erminomer.*[7]

Among the earliest West Gothic kings we find alliteration and variation and even repetition: as *Athanarich — Alarich* (395-410), and *Theoderich* I (d. 451), whose four sons are *Thorismund, Theoderich, Friedrich* and *Eurich.*[8] Here the oldest son is named after the father by alliteration and the fourth son similarly after the great-grandfather. In the case of the second son the living

[6] A. K. Müllenhoff, *Germanica Ant.* and Kögel, *Geschichte d. d. Lit.* I, 51 ff., have shown that the name of Segimer's son is Sesithankus (not Segithankus) as Wormstall would read.

[7] The name *Arminius* may now be regarded as definitely shown to be not Roman, but a Romanized Germanic name. See especially Gustav Kossinna, "Arminius Deutsch?" in *Indo-Germanische Forschungen,* II, pp. 174-184. Kossinna assumes Arminius = **Erminz,* a short name for *Erminomerus.* This is precisely the 'full-name' which the genealogy requires (see the table).

[8] See table in Dahn's *Allgemeine Geschichte,* II, 2, p. 590. The alliterations are prevailingly vocalic or in *Th.*

father's name is repeated. The third son's name is purely variational; the family theme *-rich* is also repeated in the fourth son's name. The Rugian names *Flaccitheus,* (ca. 460) and those of his sons *Feletheus* and *Ferderuch* show alliteration with retention of the end theme in the first case; when Feletheus names his son *Fridrich* we seem again to have pure alliteration.[9] Among the Amali alliteration seems to prevail: The earliest names alliterate in vowel or *H* (See *A. G.,* p. 588), then follows Athal whose son is Achiulf. The latter's sons are: *Ansila—Ediulf; Wuldulf* and *Ermanarich.* Wuldulf's son is named *Valeravans,* whose son again is *Winithar* (further *Wandalar* and *Widemer, Walemer* and *Theodemer,* sons of Wandalar). In the Vandalic line of King Godigisel, whose sons are *Guntherich* and *Genserich* we find alliterations of the fathers named, while the sons' names have the second theme in common. Thereupon the alliterative principle changes here to variation; Genserich names his son Hunerich, born ca. 450, who in turn names his son *Hilderich.* Genserich's son Genzo gives his sons variational names: *Godagis* (great-grandfather *Godigisel*); *Gunthamund* (*Guntherich,* another son of Godigisel); the third son is named by variation of the second son's name *Thrasamund.*

In the Merovingian line a special form of variational name-giving is practiced (see below) but the primary themes are prevailingly themes in *Ch.* The names are: *Childerich—Chlodovech—Chlodomer—Childibert—Chlothachar — Chlodechildis — Chram—Charibert.* Among the Longobards the letters are *A* (*Audvin,* son *Albvin*) (6th cent.) and *G.* (*Garibald,* sons *Gundovald* and *Grimvald*) (7th cent.). Among the Burgundian Gibichungs alliteration is the chief mark of kinship: *Gibiche—Godomar, Gislachar, Gundichar.* The letter is *G* further in the later descendants: *Gundeuch—Gundobad—Godegisel.* With *Godomar,* born ca. 475, son of *Gundobad,* repetition sets in[10] which henceforth is practiced by the side of alliterative and non-alliterative variation. Among the earliest kings of the Gepidi, the principle seems to be alliteration: *Trafstila,* son *Thrasarich;* and *Elemund,* sons *Ostrogotha* and *Arigusa*(?), while *Turismod,* died ca. 549, is named after *Turisin* by alliterative variation.

[9] *L. c.* 594.

[10] Storm, *l. c.* 206.

Primitive Germanic name-giving then, the above brief survey would seem to indicate, was one which combined alliteration and alliterative variation. Alliteration is found in a considerable proportion of the cases as the sole mark of the family line, while non-alliterative variation is in some lines not practiced at all, in others only sporadically evidenced. This seems to point to alliteration as the original Germanic principle; along with it alliterative variation was probably regularly practiced in general Germanic times. Pure variation, however, belongs to the age of the Germanic migrations and after. Alliteration as a survival obtains clear down to the Viking Age and in East Scandinavian gains a dominant place again in the sixth century.[11]

So far we have spoken only of the order of the two systems. Let us now consider briefly the evolution of variation.

The earliest variational names were then alliterative, it may be assumed, *i. e.,* had end-variation; this stage has been illustrated by many names cited above. What the first step was that led to the new method is indicated, perhaps, by such groups as *Gundegisel—Gunderich—Genserich.* The second son's name, Genserich, is linked to the father's name by something more than the initial *G;* we have here a kind of inchoate variation. Cp., above, *Garibald* and sons *Gundovald* and *Grimvald,* and the Burgundian names *Gundobad—Gislahad.* Again when *Kýlan* named his son *Kári*[12] the result is somewhat similar. Such identity of larger portions of the name may, of course, sometimes be purely accidental. Greater is the identity and nearer to true variation in such case as *Arnegisclus—Anagastus,* Thrasian father and son of the fourth century.[13] These cases are intermediate forms; they illustrate, it seems to me, the way in which an accidental, but from the nature of the case a frequently occurring, identity of two or more of the first sounds could finally lead to a feeling for such greater identity in the name and finally to a fixed practice of choosing names in which the first stem was identical. Variation may also have arisen in the second theme, in a manner illustrated by the names

[11] See Berger Nerman: *Studier över Svärges hedna Litteratur,* 1913, pp. 13, 17 and elsewhere.

[12] *Landnamabók,* II, 1.

[13] Schönfeld: *Wörterbuch der altgermanischen Personen- und Völkernamen,* 1911.

of the two first daughters of the Frankish king Childerich I, died 481, *Audefleda* and *Albofledis*. Here we have the function of the alliteration enforced by the identity of the main part of the second theme. This type would seem to be rather characteristic of Early Germanic. We meet with it in several of the Runic inscriptions written in the older runes, as in the Istaby inscription, Blekinge, Sweden seventh century: *HaƥuwulafR*, son of *HaeruwulafiR;* two names which also appear on the Stentofta stone, Sweden seventh century. In the O. H. G. Hildebrandslied we meet with the same method in the series: *Heribrant—Hildebrant—Hadubrant*. Other examples are, Vandalic: *Hunerich—Hilderich;* Longobardic: *Audvin—Albvin;* Burgundian: *Gislachar—Gundachar* (cp. also *Childerich—Chilperich*); Frankish: *Vigbert—Valtbert*[14]*;* Swedish (Geatic): *Hervarðr—Hjorvarðr*, etc. This method might be abundantly illustrated from the E. Scand. heroic saga. It is the same method that is in evidence when in the *Landnamabók*, Atli jarl enn mjóvi named his three sons *Hallsteinn, Hersteinn* and *Holmsteinn*.[15] Or again when Eyvindr sorkvir named his two sons *Hrómundr* and *Hermundr*, or in the variation of the father's name when *Hrosskell*, son of Þorsteinn and Lofthöna, named his son *Hallkell*.

The tendencies above briefly indicated would finally lead to two types of variational name-giving. The first would result in a type which retained the first theme but varied the second, as *Heorogar—Heoromund*. The second would lead to one in which the second theme is retained and the first changed; as *Genserich—Hunerich*. With the development of this latter type the main significance of the name as a mark of relationship must have shifted from the initial sound to the component themes. With this the principle of variation is fully developed as a dominant principle. It is to be noted here that as names with end-variation will still always have alliteration: the new principle does not do away with the old, but the old principle lives on by the side of the new. The two principles meet in this new type; alliteration and variation both operate. Also the tendency of the time toward greater identity in the names of the members of the family would undoubtedly give

[14] Valtbert named his son Vigbert, where the principle of repetition appears.

[15] *Landnamabók*, I, B. Reykjavik ed., 1891, p. 30.

a leading place to names of this type in which the first part is preserved and the suffixal theme changed; see below on the governing principles. Both in the earlier period therefore and later this type would probably dominate. This is also in actual practice the case, in the names of the Old Germanic kings. In illustration of the older practice I shall cite merely the following examples: *Gundegisel—Gunderich; Gelarich—Gelimer; Theodemer—Theoderich, Theodemund; Theoderich—Theodegoto; Amalfreda—Amalaberga; Theodehad—Theodegisl, Theodenantis; Albvin—Albsvinda; Gundovald—Gundobert; Chlodvch—Chlodomer,* etc., etc. The genealogies show this practice to be dominant throughout the whole of the migration period.

Non-alliterative or front-variation appears however now and then and especially later seems to be almost as general as end-variation. The material contained in Storm, *l. c.,* however, has only these: Vandalic, *Genserich—Hunerich, Theoderich;* Longobardic, *Aribert—Godobert;* Frankish, *Merovech—Chlodovech.* Already this reveals the relative scarcity of this type. In the tables in Dahn's *A. G.* we find also the following: *Childerich—Theuderich; Childibert—Sigibert—Dogobert; Achiulf—Ediulf, Wuldulf; Hunimund—Thorismund—Berismund; Widerich—Eutharich; Kunimund—Rosimunda; Theoderich—Eurich—Alarich,* and a few more, but in proportion to those with end-variation the number is small. This was therefore not a favored method; when the father gave a name to the son or daughter the primary theme was the one to be chosen.

There seem to have been certain other principles in operation. *E. g., where there are several children front-variation of the father's name or perhaps of the first son's name is resorted to.* Thus the second theme of the first son's name will reappear in later children's names. So when *Gundegisel* names his sons *Gunderich* and *Genserich* the latter name in addition to alliteration repeats the second theme of the first son's name. Genso names his two first sons *Gelarich* and *Gunthamund;* the second theme of the latter is repeated in the third son's name *Thrasamund.* Cp. further *Theoderich—Theodegoto* and *Astragoto; Garibald,* and sons, *Gundovald* and *Grimvald; Gundovald,* sons, *Gundebert* and *Aribert.*[17] This principle is clearly practised among the Vandals, the East Goths, the Longobards and the Burgundians. It is not always clear what

[16] Unusual is it when Ari*bert* names his sons *Bert*ari and Godi*bert.*

principles have been decisive in the choice of the type appearing. There are departures from the principle that the son is named by end-variation but they are exceptional, and due perhaps to the form of the names. *E. g.,* when *Gundegisel* names his two sons *Gunderich* and *Genserich* the second son receives a name which does not contain either of the two themes of the paternal name. It is in the final theme *-rich* that the kinship is given expression; this would seem to be the reason why he repeats this theme in his two first sons *Hunerich* and *Theoderich;* then the third son is named by a "Kurzname" based on his own name. Again exactly in the same way when *Gundovald* names his sons *Gundobert* and *Aribert, Aribert* preserves the theme *-bert* in his sons' names *Bertari* and *Godibert.* Likewise Bertari gives his two sons the names *Kuninbert* and *Luitpert.*

While there are other principles in operation in the Merovingian lists, as *repetition of the full name in alternate generations,* the principle of variation is also observed. Chlodvch's sons are named *Theoderich, Chlodomer, Chlothar* and *Childerich;* here the name of the second son follows the principle that *the primary theme of the father's name is retained in the same position in the son's name.* Similarly, when *Gunthchram* named his son *Gundobad.* This is also done by Theuderich when he named his son *Theudibert* and by the latter who named his son *Theudobald.* Later the method is obscured by the entrance of the principle of repetition. But among the Merovingians a new principle now sets in,[17] namely that of *repeating the primary theme in alternate generations.* Thus Childerich's grandson is named *Childibert* (d. 558) and a grandson of Chlotachar I is named *Chlotobert.* A grandson of *Chlotachar II,* 584-628, is named *Chlodovech* 638-656; the latter may have been named after Chlodovech I (d. 511). *The second theme is also repeated in alternate generations;* an example of this we already have in the name of *Chlodovech I,* born 466, and who is thus named after *Merovech,* and again in Chlodvech's son named Theuderich after the grandfather Childerich I. Finally this principle crosses that of the retention of the new primary theme of the father's name in the son's name when, *e. g.,* Dagobert I named his first son *Sigibert* (III, 638-656). An unusual form appears in the name *Charibert,* second son of *Chlothachar* I, d. 561. When

[17] First half of the sixth century.

Charibert in turn named his second daughter *Berthefledis* he observed the same method. In the third daughter's name, *Chrodieldis,* ancestral feminine themes were combined. Finally the repetition of the first theme in alternate generations, and the repetition of the second theme in the same alternate generations led to the repetition of the identical name in alternate generations,—the grandson is given the name of the grandfather. Examples are: Chlothachar—Gunthchram—Chlothachar (d. 573); Chlothachar—Chilperich—Chlothachar (d. 584); Dagobert I—Sigibert III—Dagobert II (d. 678), etc.

Here then among the Merovingians about 550 to 650 all types of variations are employed with the old alliterative family themes and in combination with new themes, and according to fixed principles leading at last to repetition. The principle of repetition finally leads to the selection of certain favored names: Dagobert, Sigibert and the old names Chlodovech, Chlothachar, Chilperich and Theoderich.

Perhaps the above will have indicated: 1, how variation arose and, 2, how variation as practiced among the continental West Germanic tribes and the East Germanic peoples led at last to repetition.

It would be tempting here to undertake an examination of Old English practice as evidenced in the royal genealogies. However, here we are face to face with a difficult and very complicated problem. For we have to do in this case with a people that has severed its connection with the old home, the cradle of its traditions, and has established a new home, and has furthermore in that new home come in prolonged contact with a foreign civilization. The removal from the native soil is not, however, the significant fact; for an emigrating people takes with it its household gods and its beliefs wherever it goes; old customs and beliefs may survive longer even in a new home where the process of change is checked for a time as the tradition is removed from the soil that gave it growth. But the contact with a different civilization, if equal or higher, is the all-important fact. Where such contact takes place the seeds of change have already been sown. Now in England Germanic traditions came in close, mainly hostile, contact with Celtic civilization, a civilization which itself for 400 years had been in contact with Roman civilization. But in that period

Celtic culture had not been influenced very much, it would seem, by the Romans. What follows then with the coming of Angles, Saxons and Jutes upon the invitation of Vortigern in 449 is a long struggle between native British and a transplanted Anglo-Saxon civilization. That there was cultural exchange in ways not yet investigated at all we may be sure: The solution of all such problems we shall have to leave to the Anglicist-Celticist. These questions will be settled only by those scholars who have the viewpoint of the specialist in Old English and also of the specialist in Old Irish language and tradition. So I shall leave this phase of the problem with the suggestion that names and name-giving seem to suggest that in Northumberland and East Anglia English traditions are found in their purest form; that in Mercia and Wessex the conditions are more mixed. But what belongs to both sides remains then the problem. So far Anglicists seem to have underrated the Celtic element on the one hand, while Celticists are evidently overestimating the Celtic loan.

We shall now return to the question of the relation of this new type of name-giving by repetition to the belief in the transmigration of the soul. I cannot take the time to discuss this question in detail here, but I suggest that the belief in soul-transmigration does not give rise to the practice of repetition in name-giving. The latter system was slowly evolved and has in its origin no more religious connection than the other two methods. On the other hand the belief must have existed early and attached itself to name-giving long before repetition set in. The repetition of a grandparent's name grew into repetition of the name of the departed ancestor. What took place then was a double change: First, the grandparent's name was repeated; sometimes the grandparent had died before the birth of the child to be named; here repetition was restoring to life the name of the ancestor. Again though the grandparent were living at the time of naming the child, the grandparent usually died before the namesake grandchild. Here there was equally room for associating the name in some mysterious way with the departed. The other change was in the form of the belief which regarded the soul as present in the name. In this connection I shall cite a significant bit of evidence from Isaac Tylor's *Primitive Culture,* II, p. 14. He is discussing the doctrine of migration of souls in later Jewish philosophy: "The soul of Adam passed into David, and shall pass into the Messiah, for are

not these initials in the very name of Ad(a)m, and does not Ezekiel say that 'my servant David shall be their prince forever.'" Here then the migration of the soul into the new body is assured by the repetition of *any* letter of the name as the initial of the new name. And it would be a natural step for the belief to attach itself to the initial of the basic name which then is to be used as the initial in the new name.

Among the Old Germanic peoples too, then, the soul may have been thought present in the initial after death and transferable with it; alliterative name-giving by repetition of the initial of the departed no doubt was regarded as insuring the transmigration of the soul of the departed into the new body. But among our Germanic ancestors the theme had come to be the name-unit in the main; in variational name-giving the whole theme represented the family character and the soul. Now the tendency to greater and greater identity in the name as the mark of relationship was there; but the belief also aided this tendency. What took place in the change from variation to repetition was a development in the belief according to which the whole name came to be regarded as the symbol of the soul and its vehicle after the death of the body. Finally the belief associates itself exclusively with the repetition of the whole name of the ancestor whose soul and personality it is desired shall continue a new existence in the present descendant.

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SHAKESPEARE'S LAST SONNETS

One who ventures an additional word on the Sonnets of Shakespeare after everything has apparently been said thrice over might do well to introduce himself thus: "I am a Southamptonite, dating the Sonnets with Sarrazin from 1592 to 1596, accepting with Dowden the quarto order of the first 125 as chronological, with Massey identifying the Dark Lady as Elizabeth Vernon, and with Wyndham proclaiming the Rival Poet to be Drayton." Or: "I am a Pembrokist, dating the Sonnets with Mackail from 1598 to 1603, with Tyler identifying the Dark Lady as Mary Fitton, and holding with Minto that the Rival Poet is Chapman." Or: "I agree with

Sir Sidney Lee that the Sonnets are literary exercises which do not record the poet's own experience; I believe with Alden that it is impertinent to try to identify the Dark Lady; I think with Fleay that W. H. is not the youth to whom the First Series is addressed at all but Thorpe's "only procurer" of them; I am confident, with Walsh, that the order is wholly haphazard and must be completely readjusted to make the Sonnets intelligible; I haven't the faintest idea who the Rival Poet could have been, for I hold, with Rolfe, that many of the First Series may have been addressed to a woman. Or finally: "I am a free lance among the Sonnets' critics with a special set of conjectures all my own; though I do agree with Butler that W. H. is William Hughes, with Acheson that the Dark Lady is Mistress Davanant, and with Montmorency that the Rival Poet is Spenser; I realize, with Beeching, that Sonnet 107 must refer to the death of Elizabeth, though the majority, as McClumpha shows, are contemporary with *Romeo and Juliet* and *Love's Labour's Lost.*" Having thus, or by some similar formula, presented his credentials, the new champion may enter the lists and proceed to break his spear against the Veiled Knight who guards the Mystery of the Sonnets.

My own choice among these and other possibilities, together with my particular reasons for dating the majority of the Sonnets from 1595 to 1598, I have given in the *Publications of the M. L. A.* for September, 1915, and I there maintained that much that we find in the Sonnets is mirrored in the plays. There is, however, one problem in this connection on which I then offered no comment but on which I now have a word to say. To introduce this problem I venture to quote a few sentences from Professor A. C. Bradley's lecture on "Shakespeare the Man." [1]

". . . But when he is dealing with lechery and corruption, the undercurrent of disgust seems to become audible. Is it not true that in the plays from *Hamlet* to *Timon* that subject, in one shape or another, is continually before us; that the intensity of loathing in Hamlet's language about his mother's lust is unexampled in Shakespeare; that the treatment of the subject in *Measure for Measure,* though occasionally purely humorous, is on the whole quite unlike the treatment in *Henry IV;* . . . that this same tone is as plainly heard in the unquestioned parts of *Timon;* and that . . . there is no apparent reason why Lear in his exalted madness

[1] *Oxford Lectures on Poetry,* pp. 325, 326, *n.*

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